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CO, P. 13

19 SEP 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Plans

SUBJECT: Comments on Proposed Senior Operations Course

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1. ☐ comments on the proposed course are keyed to the paragraph numbers and letters of the Attachment to DDP 8-3198:

I. SCOPE

The emphasis should be on operating and managing operations and not on abstract problems of budgeting, planning, organization, and so on, which are already either overdone or adequately covered by other courses.

A. Tradecraft and related technical procedures are not vital problems today. They are vital but they are not problems. A vital problem is our slow rate of acquiring great new assets, mainly great informants, and what we need to discuss and teach is how to conceive and run programs of operational activity which will produce assets. What do Stations do to create new programs and get new agents, how does the COS get his officers to create, what does a Branch do to help him, or to create its own assets in the U.S.?

GROUP 1
Excluded from automatic

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- B. If the topics to be touched on here are such things as the NEW LEFT, social reform in backward countries, the need for the U.S.A. to come up with ideological alternative for Orientals, and the influence of weather and environment on cultural advance, I'm for it, but we can't teach philosophy, geopolitics, and communications in this short course.
- C. I would leave Planning and Programming out completely. Privately and among ourselves we should admit this elaborate and obscure ritual is something we do to satisfy the Bureau of the Budget and it really helps the CS very little. It is adequately understood by people who have to do it. On the Program Review Panel, I have found that the best programs were those prepared by experts, like Furthermore, Programming procedures change so much from year to year that what you teach now is useless next year.
- D. If anything is to be taught on the organization of the Intelligence Community, it should be done swiftly and mercifully by a gifted speaker who can make the subject interesting. The way the community works in shaping and implementing U.S. foreign policy is more interesting and a little

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more time could be spent on it, but by no means days.

E.

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F. Aim F, to give the officer a chance to take stock of himself, look around, think about our problems, and "improve his capability to respond to new and additional responsibility and challenge" is a genuinely noble one, but there is small chance it will be reached if the course is run the way it is described in II. STRUCTURE OF THE COURSE, the next topic.

II. STRUCTURE OF THE COURSE

Unless I misread this paragraph, this course will be run at a fast pace, with a lot of reading, charade-type operational problems, research to do on your own time after hours, with typing thrown in as an added benefit, with a healthy air of competition, a premium on stamina, and a term paper to boot. In my opinion this is not the way to run a course for senior officers.

*agree
gm*

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after { If you get important people for this course and you want them to think, remembering that all of them are already overworked at Headquarters or in the field, that most of them are better informed, or at least as well informed, as their instructors, the course should be conducted by the lecture-seminar method, at a relatively relaxed pace, with top-notch speakers presenting the most provocative subjects and telling the unvarnished truth. It would be legitimate, I think, to have teams which would work on certain problems and present their findings to the group as a whole. I am doubtful about the individual thesis idea unless the students have plenty of time to write. Most of these men will not be able to type!

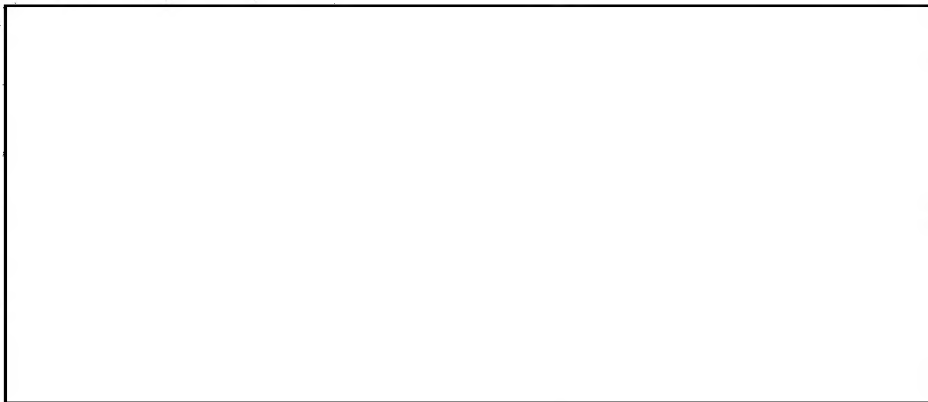
III. LENGTH AND LOCATION

A course as long as 6 to 8 weeks is, in my opinion, out of the question. All the intelligent people in the CS talking in relays would run out of wisdom in half that time. The senior officers you want would not be available for that length of time, even between assignments. Four weeks would be the maximum, and three weeks would be better. The matter to be taught and discussed can be presented at a fast pace to senior officers, who are -- by and large -- very smart.

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As to the site, I would urge it start at Headquarters to enable the DDP and the DCI and others to kick it off, and that the balance of it be where the atmosphere is club-like, convivial, and the lay-out ideal, with the mess, quarters, and seminar space close together. "Social rooms" are conveniently

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In the FI Seminars, I have found that the relaxed atmosphere, the landscape, the unique hospitality, and the campus-like physical plant make the place for the "old grad" set. I have had several senior officers not noted for their sentimentality inquire about attending these seminars.

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IV. CAPACITY

25 to 30 students GS-14 and higher seems good to me.

I would urge that a sprinkling of very senior officers, including Staff Chiefs and Deputies, and Division Chiefs and Deputies be enrolled. This would make it mandatory that the course be short and high-class.

2. One thing that could be built into this whole course without special gimmickry would be "How to Write." We need to improve writing in the Clandestine Services. If all the training material were written in simple, direct style, and if all papers submitted were critiqued for effective style, we would start to spread ideas about clear writing around the CS at a high level, where it is needed at least as much as down below. It would not be necessary to have lectures, demonstrations, seminars, quizzes, and contests on clear writing.

3. The quality of instruction in this course will have to be extremely high. I am not an expert on this, but the managers of the course must be carefully selected. Perhaps many of the good speakers could be drawn from the student body.

4. Considerable time will be needed to work out the doctrine to be taught and discussed in this new course. Topics worth teaching are mostly unsettled and controversial, and in some cases the doctrine is clearly wrong. FI Staff will have some important input on many of the subjects, but we expect to learn more from the course than we could ever contribute to it.

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